

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

DET 4 AFSCF MAHE ISLAND SEYCHELLES

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 0152

LIMDIS

LONDON FOR HAVERKAMP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SE, UK, OAU, XO, MARR

SUBJECT: MANCHAM ON SEYCHELLES INDEPENDENCE AND BIOT

1. SEYCHELLES CHIEF MINISTER JAMES MANCHAM AND MINISTER OF SOCIAL SERVICES DAVID JOUBERT, IN BRIEF NAIROBI STOPOVER EN ROUTE OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE MEETING IN DAR ES SALAAM, MET WITH DCM AND EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER FOR HOUR-LONG TOUR D'HORIZON. CONCERNING SEYCHELLES INDEPENDENCE, MANCHAM SAID CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE (INVOLVING FCO OFFICIALS, DELEGATIONS FROM MAJORITY SDP AND OPPOSITION SPUP) NOW SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN LONDON MARCH 9-22. MANCHAM AND FINANCIAL ADVISORS ALSO PLAN TALKS WITH UK OFFICIAL IN LATE JANUARY - EARLY FEBRUARY ON ASSISTANCE HMG WILL PROVIDE POST-INDEPENDENCE SEYCHELLES.

2. MANCHAM EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER OPPOSITION SPUP CALL
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FOR PRE-INDEPENDENCE RETURN TO SEYCHELLES OF ALDABRA,

DESROCHES AND FARQUHAR ISLAND GROUPS WHICH WERE DETACHED FROM SEYCHELLES IN 1965 TO FORM BIOT (ALONG WITH DIEGO GARCIA FORMERLY ADMINISTERED FROM MAURITIUS). MANCHAM REFERRED AT LENGTH TO RECENT SPUP MOTION IN SEYCHELLES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEMANDING RETURN OF ISLANDS DETACHED FROM SEYCHELLES AND PERSISTENT SPUP PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGNS TARGETED AT BRITAIN AND INTERNATIONAL FORA.

3. MANCHAM PARTICULARLY WORRIED THAT "LEFTIST MINISTERS" IN PRESENT LABOR GOVERNMENT WILL SUPPORT SPUP DEMAND. MANCHAM EXPECTS SPUP LEADERS RENE AND SINON, WHO ALSO ATTENDING DAR MEETING, TO MAKE PITCH FOR CONTINUED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE ON GROUNDS SEYCHELLES INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE INCOMPLETE WITHOUT DETACHED ISLANDS. MANCHAM'S OWN ATTITUDE TOWARD THESE ISLANDS IS SOMEWHAT AMBIVALENT. ALTHOUGH HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THEM RESTORED, UNTIL NOW HE ACCEPTED BRITISH ARGUMENT THAT THEIR DETACHMENT HAD BEEN ADEQUATELY COMPENSATED BY CONSTRUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON SEYCHELLES PRINCIPAL ISLAND OF MAHE. HE HOPES, AT MINIMUM, SEYCHELLES WILL BE PERMITTED TO EXPLOIT FISHING AND TOURIST POTENTIAL OF ALDABRA, DESROCHES AND FARQUHAR ISLANDS WITHIN BIOT.

4. MANCHAM INDICATED HE FEELS UNDER MOUNTING OAU PRESSURE FOR EARLY INDEPENDENCE FOR SEYCHELLES. HE HOPED TO SEE FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN IN TANZANIA AND PERSUADE HIM TO ISSUE STATEMENT ON LONDON CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS AND UPCOMING INDEPENDENCE TO SOFTEN CRITICISM MANCHAM ANTICIPATING FROM MORE RADICAL LIBERATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO HE BELIEVES WILL ACCUSE HIM OF ATTEMPTING PROLONG BRITISH RULE.

5. MANCHAM REPEATED HIS DESIRE VISIT U.S. "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE".

6. DCM LINDSTROM PLANNING VISIT TO SEYCHELLES JAN. 15-18 AT WHICH TIME MANCHAM SAID HE WILL PROVIDE FULL BRIEFING ON DAR MEETING.

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7. COMMENT: WHILE ISSUE OF RESTORATION OF THREE FORMER SEYCHELLES ISLAND GROUPS DOES NOT, IN ITSELF, APPEAR TO IMPINGE ON U.S. INTERESTS, CONTINUED CONSIDERATION THIS QUESTION IN INTERNATIONAL FORA MAY BECOME ADDITIONAL FACTOR ENCOURAGING MAURITIUS TO SEEK RETURN OF DIEGO GARCIA. EMBASSY PORT LOUIS MAY WISH TO COMMENT ON THIS POSSIBILITY.
MARSHALL

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